

Re: Appearance on Question Period - Minister Blair

From: "Roy, Cecely" <cecely.roy@pmo-cpm.gc.ca>
To: "Cullinan, Annie" <annie.cullinan@qpc-cpr.gc.ca>
Cc: "Vaillancourt, Ann-Clara" <ann-clara.vaillancourt@pmo-cpm.gc.ca>, "Power, Mary-Liz" <mary-liz.power@pmo-cpm.gc.ca>, "Astravas, Zita" <zita.astravas@qpc-cpr.gc.ca>, "Barrack, Radey" <radey.barrack@qpc-cpr.gc.ca>, "Rettig, Christina" <christina.rettig@qpc-cpr.gc.ca>, "Williams, Caroline" <caroline.williams@qpc-cpr.gc.ca>
Date: Sun, 13 Feb 2022 14:06:52 +0000

Thanks for this Annie - much appreciated.

Cecely Roy
Press Secretary | Attachée de presse
Office of the Prime Minister | Cabinet du premier ministre

On Feb 13, 2022, at 8:58 AM, Cullinan, Annie <Annie.Cullinan@qpc-cpr.gc.ca> wrote:

Hi all,

Minister Blair had his headset on so I only have one side of things, but I've made note of his responses below. A few flags - he was asked about the video circulating of the OPP officer but I think he navigated it well. He also made comments about invoking the federal Emergencies Act and I've highlighted that section.

Thanks,

Annie

//

A1: I would like to stress the importance of the declaration made by the Province of Ontario of a State of Emergency and the regulations that they brought forward yesterday. And the important work that the OPP is now leading on behalf of our police services, in order to open that bridge up and open up the that trade. I acknowledge to you that the Ambassador Bridge is one of our most important pieces of critical infrastructure. The people that are demonstrating there, I don't think all of them understand the huge harm that they are doing to workers in Ontario, to the manufacturing processes to the Canadian economy, but their leaders clearly do. And then that's why they've targeted at the Ambassador Bridge, because it is a significant artery for the lifeblood of the Canadian economy and Canadian workers. And so the we are supporting the law enforcement efforts, the OPP have gone in there, and Commissioner Creek is an excellent police leader and, and a strong commander and he's in there with his people. And I'm sure that they've got a plan and they're working through it.

A2: Well, and I spent forty years in policing. And I will tell you, the country needs the police to do their job. We need them to enforce our laws, to restore peace and order at our borders and in our cities. And we need them to use the tools that are available to them. And frankly, I don't want to have any arguments over jurisdiction, I think very clearly, and I'm in agreement with all Canadians, that we all need the police to do their job and listening very carefully to the police on what they need to do their job. And that's why important discussions going on, and bringing

forward regulations that the police need to be effective, and also ensuring that they have the people, the resources, and the tools they need to do the job. But ultimately, it comes down to we need the police to restore order, to uphold the law.

A3: I will tell you this while we've been in constant contact with the Province of Ontario, the Premier and the Prime Minister have talked a number of times about what needs to be done. The Premier took I think, very strong, important action yesterday into not only the declaration of emergency, but moving quickly to bring forward the new regulations that are authorized under those emergency powers. When circumstances exceed the capacity of the provinces to manage it under their authorities, we're quite prepared to use additional authorities that are available to the federal government. But it's also there's other federal resources. We have we have an Emergency Act. And I will tell you, there has been a constant and vigorous examination of those authorities and what's required. But most importantly, and it also informs discussions with the province. We've been working with the province and asking them very clearly. What do you need, what more do you need, the way the law is written is we've got to go first to those provincial authorities. On Friday, they used them.

A4: We are prepared to use every tool available to us including amused emergency powers, and to make sure that we bring every resource of the federal government to bear this. This is a critical situation for the country Evan. The closing of our borders, the targeting on critical infrastructure, particularly our points of entry by the people behind these protests, is a significant national security threat to this country. And we have to do what is necessary to end it. And that includes supporting the police and doing their important job, but also looking at every other resource of the federal government that we will we're quite prepared to utilize to resolve the situation.

This question was regarding the video circulating of an OPP officer speaking to convoy members

A5: The profession of policing recruits from the human race and so I make no excuses for what individuals may do, but I have a great deal of confidence, Evan, after having spent most of my life in those institutions, that the police know their job and we want to make sure that they have the tools and the resources available to do that job. And we need them to do it. Like very clearly. And I think that's been very clearly communicated to the police leadership in this country. We need them to do this job, it's their responsibility, and we'll do everything we can to support them in doing it.

A6: Yeah, let me be really clear those manners were not put in place to divide people rather to protect people that were there, they were put in place to protect the health and safety of Canadians. And Evan, very clearly, vaccines work. Vaccines are the thing that are helping us get through this pandemic. And we've done everything possible to make those vaccines available in to encourage Canadians to get vaccinated, because it's important. That's why those mandates exist. We also recognize and we examined every day, that the measures that we have put in place to protect Canadians and when the advice and circumstances change we have committed.

A7: Well, first of all, there's a number of measures that Dr. Tam has spoken to us about, particularly with respect to testing at our borders and travel advisories. And that advice is being updated. And we'll hear very soon, very shortly from our health minister on his response to those that advice, but the vaccine mandates first of all. The vaccination of Canadians is the thing that that works to keep Canadians safe. And we are we are not intending to ease our restrictions on the need for vaccinations until this pandemic is over. You know, it's people. Listen, let me acknowledge right up front. I know Canadians are frustrated and they want to see an end of this pandemic soon. So does everybody in our government, we've all been working tirelessly to protect Canadians and to bring this to an end and when we get to an end, when we get to that that end state where it's no longer necessary to continue to promote and mandate the use of vaccines, we'll certainly be prepared to do that. But we haven't reached that point yet. You know, we've just come to the Omicron wave we have to make sure that we're prepared for whatever comes in the future

End of interview

After the interview, the Minister had a brief discussion with Evan around the Integrated Command Centre and the Minister stated that he believe it will be helpful. He also made a comment that the response in Toronto was "substantially different" and that they managed it effectively. He also noted the effective response in Quebec and Montreal. He noted that the border is an enormous threat, and while the situation in Ottawa is serious, but the situation at the border is awful and needs to be fixed.